

Imdat Solak

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Seasoned General Manager in Digital/Mobile Media & E-Commerce

Results- and execution-oriented digital/mobile media executive with a strong record in growing digital/mobile businesses, changing traditional approaches across the corporation towards digital and mobile media and creating strong new growth areas. Highly qualified executive with a software-engineering background and demonstrated abilities in fast-paced environments: complex and matrixed organizations as well as lean start-ups; expert in building and managing highly successful cross-functional, cross-cultural teams of up to 500 people. Highly respected and accepted negotiation partner across USA, Europe and Asia with a strong ability to adapt and understand local cultural differences; 10+ years of experience in strategy and business development; 15+ years in digital and mobile media development & operations; 15+ years experience in international business development; 20+ years experience in general and operational management; 25+ years experience in information technology (software development, architecting, release, deployment & operations).

Proven Senior Experience in: Business Strategy, Mobile Applications, Mobile Strategy, E-Commerce, Negotiations, Entrepreneurship, New Business Development, General Management, Product Strategy, Product Management, Corporate Strategy, Corporate Development, Software R&D, Digital/Mobile Media Management, Digital/Mobile Media Operations, Hands-on-M&A, Software Engineering (Digital/Mobile), Analytics, Insights, Customer & Market Analytics

Languages: German, English and Turkish (fluent, both written and spoken)

Education

MBA – Univ. of Salzburg Bus. School, Salzburg, Austria 2003-2005

Finished with MBA degree in Project- and Process Management and “best of class” award; Master Thesis: “*The Role of the Chief Knowledge Officer in Media Companies*”

Ernst-Reuter High School, Berlin, Germany 1981-1986

Finished with High School diploma and award “best of school”

Professional Experience

Owner, Solak Consulting, New York/Hamburg, Germany 01/2005 – ongoing

- Consulted various companies in areas ranging from the right hosting strategy to how to launch digital products to acquisition-of or investment-in companies (the latter mostly for VC companies)
- Consulted the German Government on matters relating to digital media, denizens, internet security, youth protection, and integration of foreign born citizens into German society
- Trained managers in management and leadership skills
- Consulted a large NY-based media company in increasing tablet magazine distribution

VP Nokia (App)Store Worldwide, Nokia, Inc., NY, NY 08/2009 – 06/2012

- Introduced a strong data-driven culture with real-time store performance data availability, thus enabling all teams to make near-real-time decisions in optimizing store performance and thus increasing overall store application downloads from 300k per day (joining time) to 1m per day four months later and over 15m downloads per day in January 2012.



- Managed teams from 10-250 employees (from around 50 countries), including a large operational excellence project which reduced the OPEX by nearly 50% within six months through process analysis, supplier contract renegotiation, more efficient delivery of the store services and replacing technologies with more state-of-the-art ones, which require lower hardware, software and human resource investment.
- Managed various trainings for managers from direct reports to top management at Nokia about consumer-data-driven business management, consumer-oriented product development and operations culture, including workshops with top Nokia management (EVP, SVP-level) on understanding consumer behavior online.

VP New Media International, Axel Springer AG, Berlin, Germany **07/2006 – 06/2009**

- Reporting directly to the Executive Board (first Andreas Wiele, EVP, later Matthias Döpfner, CEO), created a strategy on how to grow international new media business from an estimated 200kEUR revenues (per year) in 2006 to over 200mEUR revenues per year in 2009 and executed on it in a highly profitable way
- Acquired 74.9% shares of Anima Publishers s.r.o. (Czech Republic)
- Acquired Amiado AG, usgang AG, PartyGuide AG (Switzerland)
- Acquired 84% of shares of auFeminin.com S.A. (France; publicly listed at NYSE Euronext) with a mandatory PTO (now 80%); strongly contributed to the acquisition of ZANOX AG

General Manager, Burda-IC, Munich, Germany **08/2003 – 12/2005**

- Successfully negotiated a licensing agreement with Gravity LLC in Korea to introduce Ragnarok Online (MMOG) to Europe
- Successfully launched (within five months after contract signing) and operated Ragnarok Online Europe
- Successfully created Burda-IC as a company (later sold to Pro7Sat1 Media)
- Managed a team of around 70 people in Europe and South Korea

Director New Media Intl, Burda Media, Munich, Germany **05/2001 – 12/2005**

- Successfully launched various online offerings in Turkey and South Korea
- Instrumental (strategy development) in helping our partner RCS in Italy in acquisition of DADA, one of the largest digital media companies in Italy
- Created successful strategies for Burda Board to enter digital media internationally
- Successfully trained local (Turkey, Thailand, Korea, Italy, ...) managers in digital media
- This role was (from 2003 onward) parallel to my role as General Manager Burda-IC

CTO, Burda Digital, Munich, Germany **07/1999 – 04/2001**

- Successfully launched various incubation projects such as Music&More, Carracho, eNow, and more
- Technical due diligence during investment analysis periods
- Various roles in start-ups such as interims-CEO, -COO, -CTO,...

Managing Consultant, Scout24, Munich, Germany **09/1998 – 06/1999**

- Successfully launched, as co-project manager, ImmoScout24 (Europe's largest real-estate online market) with a call-center and internet offering within eight months of project launch, including building a call-center from scratch
- Successfully analyzed and (technically) integrated AutoScout24 (an acquisition)
- Developed key strategies about new classifieds areas such as health, finance, jobs

CTO, Cyberlab (Burda), Munich, Germany **12/1997 – 07/1998**

Brief role as interims-CTO during the setup of Cyberlab Interactive Productions, including re-launching the German Government website (www.bundesregierung.de)


Deputy Technical Director HOS (Burda), Munich, Germany
12/1995 – 11/1997

- Single-handedly developed the Health Online Service (HOS) web platform, thus replacing a 500kUSD per year 3rd party platform within three months
- Developed and introduced the first web-mail in Europe (February 1996)
- Planned and ran the first live transmission of a surgery over the Internet (March 1996)
- Negotiated the largest single online advertising contract with a bank at that time (June 1996)
- Actively worked in government committees on specifying the first health-care ID card for Germany (just introduced around 2010)
- Actively worked in various European Union projects with regards to billing systems for online and telecommunications companies.

Co-Founder & CTO, IREX AG, Munich, Germany
01/1993 – 12/1995

- Developed the first real-estate online market in Germany, including the desktop-application for NeXT computers

Chief Scientist, DART, Kiel, Germany
01/1991 – 12/1992

- Developed the first store management software for NeXTSTEP computers, on which Intershop Online (an e-commerce platform) was later based
- Introduced ground-breaking new user interface/user experience philosophies into software development

Consultant Developer, RagTime GmbH, Düsseldorf, Germany
02/1990 – 12/1990

Worked, as a term-limited consultant developer, on the spreadsheet functionality of RagTime desktop publishing software (certain functions, such as cut/copy/paste were about ten times faster after I introduced new techniques into the spreadsheet part of RagTime).

Chief Developer, FM Elektronik, Berlin, Germany
02/1988 – 12/1989

- Developed "FM Q101", a quality assurance software for car company suppliers
- Introduced the first graphical-interface for mission-critical apps on MS-DOS
- Introduced first multi-tasking and hard-disk mirroring solution for MS-DOS

Other Activities

Publications:

- Book, "Wealth & Wellbeing – Volume 1: Management" (published – Amazon & iTunes)
- Book, "Wealth & Wellbeing – Volume 2: Profit & Values" (in review)
- Book, "Wealth & Wellbeing – Volume 3: Change & Disruption" (work in progress; Volumes 4-10 in planning)

Guest Speaker (Examples):

- Fairleigh Dickinson University, ISE; Topic: "Wealth & Wellbeing: Profit & Values" (Oct 16th, 2013)
- Munich Media Days: Keynote Speaker, topic "Mobile Media" (Oct 14th, 2010)
- German Conference at Harvard: Innovate or Bust (Feb 19-20, 2010)
- German Federal Government: Youth Protection Law (2002)

Business/Management Angel Work:

- PeachPayments (South Africa) – StartUp in Mobile Billing (2012, ongoing)
- Start2Next (Czech Republic) – StartUp in News Discovery (2013)
- NewCo (NY, USA) – StartUp in Mobile Medical Solutions Area (confidential) (2013, ongoing)